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By

SAMUEL GUY INMAN

Committee on Cooperation in Latin America
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By Samuel Guy Inman

Secretary of the Committee on Coöperation in Latin American

BETWEEN the beginning of last July and the middle of November I visited Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, Paraguay, Chile and Spain. Earlier in the year I had visited the Caribbean and, a few months before, Mexico, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. So I have had a fairly inclusive view of the Spanish and Portuguese world within the last year. As on no previous visit, I found I could not merely study my own special interests, but necessarily had to consider whether any special interests can long continue to exist during the rapid change that now seems likely to overtake our whole present order. So while I did not neglect the work of the Committee on Coöperation, I was led more than on any of my other visits, into public discussion of fundamental economic, social and religious questions which are troubling our civilization today. In every country I was asked by the press to give my views on the economic and spiritual crises and the opinions that I expressed may have accounted somewhat for the wide range of invitations I received to discuss these questions. In each country I lectured in the national university, interviewed the president and various cabinet members, visited numerous educational and religious institutions and enjoyed fellowship with any number of individuals in all walks of life. Former friendships thrust me into the midst of the pulsating life and problems of each community the moment I arrived.

It is certainly the non-industrial countries that are happy today. Of course, all feel the world-wide economic slump, but in a poor country like Paraguay, every one seems happy. No one has much, but every one has something. No one is very rushed, but every one has something to do. There are no breadlines and no strikes to worry about. Spain seemed as happy as one could wish to find a people. The streets and cafés of Madrid are crowded day and night with smiling, laughing, slow-moving crowds. The *peseta* is worth less than half what it used to be, but it buys about as much in Spain itself and everybody seems to have one or two to spend. I don't know much about the gold standard, but the two countries that seemed to be straining themselves the most were the two on the gold standard, France and the United States. Needless to say, they are also the two most unpopular.

Cheap Money Affects Relations with the United States

Travel in all of these countries is exceedingly cheap for one who carries American dollars. While he naturally rejoices in having his money go so far, he realizes also the serious disadvantage that this brings to the United States as a whole. The purchase of American goods, the payment of American loans, the coming of students and other visitors to our country—all this becomes almost impossible. Even if one has the money it is almost impossible to get it out of the country at present because of the restrictions on exchange, which therefore are compelling each nation more and more to isolate itself from the rest of the world.

This depreciated money also increases

greatly the burden of South American countries that must now repay the large loans recently secured in the United States, for in spite of these changed conditions bankers have seldom been willing to make readjustments to lower interest or to lessen the amount required annually for sinking funds. This has brought a deep feeling of resentment against this country. As ex-president Brum of Uruguay says, "When you were in trouble during the World War, we declared our solidarity with you and broke off relations with Germany. But now that we are in trouble you seem to take no account of it. We expect to pay our debts, but certainly when our dollar in relation to yours is half what it was when we borrowed we should have some readjustment of terms. But this is completely denied us. So it would be natural for us in the future, if the United States should have war with any other country, to say, 'Well, all right, do the best you can. We now know that there is nothing to this idea of special friendship among American nations.' "

Weakening Pan-Americanism

The Pan-American movement has also been greatly weakened by the failure to settle the Chaco question. This failure makes clear the disorganized, divided and weakened condition of the peace machinery on the American continent. The Pan-American Union is not allowed to discuss political questions in spite of popular opinion to the contrary. The League of Nations, to which most Latin American countries belong, is afraid, because of the United States, to interfere in American affairs. The hurriedly organized Neutral Commission at Washington has not met with the backing of a number of the immediate neighbors of Bolivia and Paraguay to stop this ridiculous war. Therefore there has been no sufficiently powerful pressure on Bolivia and Paraguay. As the president of Argentina said to me when I was pressing him as to why Argentina did not act: "Washington has the baton. We are powerless here."

The newspapers of South America are filled with charges that American oil interests are backing Bolivia, and thus fundamentally upsetting the peace of the continent. Argentina during my visit was having an excited discussion about whether government officials had been bought by American oil companies—an exact replica of Tea Pot Dome! These American corporations owe it to their country and to themselves to clear up this situation.

Cause of Latin American Revolts

Revolution of course is the most important word in South America today. After that continent had seemed to abandon revolution, country after country suddenly returned to it some two years ago. It is now fairly easy to trace the cause of those revolutions. Following the World War there developed a number of dictators in South America who believed in rapid economic progress in their countries. At the same time United States bankers were seeking places for the investment of surplus capital. These investments were multiplied rapidly. In Colombia, for example, our investments in 1913 amounted to two million dollars but in 1929 they had grown to two hundred sixty million dollars, in Chile from fifteen millions to seven hundred millions, and in Argentina from forty millions to six hundred eleven millions. With the crash in Wall Street, these loans were suddenly stopped and the dictators were no longer able to pay their armies, to give out long contracts, and, in other ways, to buy friends. So these dictators fell. For besides their political enemies, there has been a growing social idealism in every one of these lands and the socially minded people took this opportunity of ridding themselves of their exploiters in order to

work for a new democratic era. But the dictators had made no preparation for democracy. So all South America has been in revolution, civil war, internal strife, militarism, chaos: Sao Paulo against the rest of Brazil; Paraguay and Bolivia in a bloody war; Peru and Colombia mobilized because of a little unknown town in Leticia on a swampy frontier; Ecuador and Chile in chaotic convulsions. Even Argentina and Uruguay broke diplomatic relations over a most trivial incident. Argentina today is on the brink of another revolution. There remains only Venezuela, where the dictator, Gomez, has filled the jails with the flower of the nation's manhood in preparation for one of the worst revolutions that this continent shall ever have seen.

Is Revolution the Way Out?

As a matter of fact the whole world is in revolution. In countries where there is no actual fighting between armies there are so many strikes, mobs and hunger marches, which result in the spilling of blood, that the situation in almost any country may easily be converted into armed revolution. Does such revolution bring the desired results? There comes a time in the life of every people when, if they can find no other means of liberating themselves from unbearable exploitation they will take up arms in order to secure justice. If the armed movement is prolonged the results are terrible. On the other hand, one cannot deny that at times a fundamental revolution that goes to the roots of national evil, as a surgeon at times must cut very near to the vitals of his patient, seems to bring results that justify the loss of much blood. Is there a better way?

Spain an Example

I believe there is. And it seems to me that Spain has just shown us that way by its recent bloodless revolution. This accomplishment was the result of long preparation. Some twenty years ago a group of young liberals began to seek in many parts of the world the preparation they would need to guide their nation into a real democracy. They went to Oxford, to Berlin, to Columbia, to Harvard, to the Sorbonne and various other intellectual centers to study various specialities in the art of government. And today Spain seems to be the one country that with the combination of scholarly and political acumen, is fundamentally reorganizing her system through peaceful and democratic methods.

On the American continent we are desperately in need of discovering means other than violent ones of securing justice. Some nations are losing the best of their manhood in this program of violence without gaining the desired ends. Recent revolutions have been started almost always by the students, the idealists. As they have not been able alone to carry out their plans to eliminate the dictators, the military has been invited to help. The generals, pluming themselves as angels of reform, promise the students to coöperate in the reform program. But when the blow is struck and the generals come into power they turn their backs on the idealists and do what the militaristic always do—hound every man who does not unconditionally bow the knee before them. One of the explanations of the unrest in Argentina, reported these days in the press, is that the government has severely limited the right of free discussion. Nothing would more help the cause of social reform on the American continent than the experimentation with certain types of nonviolent resistance.

Three Parties Struggle for Power

There are three elements, roughly speaking, struggling for the dominance of South America. The first and most conservative believes in the old economic

and political system, to be supported by a strong military power with strong foreign economic backing. The second, the awakened socially-minded people, are fully aware of the backwardness of their lands in educational, social and health programs and are working with enthusiasm to bring about reform. The third group, the radical communistic, believe that the old state must be overturned by violence, the old vassalage to foreign capital destroyed, and a new socialistic state developed. Some of them are connected organizationally with Russian Communism, but most, though philosophically at one with the Third International, are practically radical nationalists working for a new order in their own land, along the lines of its special idiosyncrasy.

The control of the continent at present is very largely in the hands of the reactionary group: that means that fascism and not communism is the dominant danger today. But those of the extreme left are growing stronger as the abuses of the military parties increase. The reformers of the center are trying to hold steady and advance by evolutionary methods, but it is very doubtful unless they can unite with groups from outside for strong action, whether or not they can stem the tide.

The recent experiences of Latin America in revolutions undoubtedly have many lessons for other people who are asking whether they will adopt revolution as the means of securing social justice. I have deeply appreciated the privilege of discussing with the leading minds of South America and Spain, during the last few months, the ways out of the present world chaos. I firmly believe that we can avoid having a rapid spread of bloody revolution on this continent if all open-minded people will frankly admit the failure of the present order, and turn to the prompt building of a new one.

Unity of Liberally Minded

What we need is a unity among all the open-minded people working for reform. Such groups in South America are usually quite unaware of similar groups in the United States, believing that every one in this country is hopelessly bound up with a business and imperialistic order. In South America as in Spain I found large numbers who haven't any other idea but that we must move into a very much more socialized order. And who of us can doubt it? Who wants to cling to the old order? An order where there is more hunger than ever at a time when the farms and factories are overproducing, where there is more unemployment than ever while there is more work that ought to be done, where militarism is growing as rapidly as are the limitations on freedom of speech, where dictators flourish proportionate to the growing numbers of theoretical democracies; when wars, more fatal than ever because of new scientific machines of destruction, increase apace with the treaties declaring the outlawry of war—who wants to continue in such an order? Certainly Christians should not, for they have the example of Christ, who taught us the new order called the Kingdom of Heaven!

The overwhelming impression of my whole trip was this one of the necessity of the open-minded, socially-minded and spiritually-minded people of our countries getting together to save our civilization.

Everywhere these liberal groups are coming nearer to our position—that moral and religious convictions must be the basis on which the world will find a new road. Dr. Alfredo Palacios is an outstanding radical leader of Argentina. When we invited him to attend the Montevideo Congress on Christian Work in 1925, he refused on the grounds that he did not believe in religion and that our group was too closely allied with the pro-

gram of economic imperialism. The first day I arrived at Buenos Aires recently, he came to greet me. At a luncheon in his home with a group of students, he said, "Yes, friend Inman, we have taken away religion from the people and given them nothing in return. Therefore, we have the sad spectacle of this broken civilization."

In every address I made in the universities and cultural centers I stated my convictions concerning the need of Christian faith and it was always the part of my lecture that received most comment. In Madrid I was honored at a reception given by the Rector and professors of the university, following which I lectured at the Center of Historic Studies. In the discussion of "Education and the New Social Order," I stressed the failure of modern liberalistic thought to impart to youth any driving convictions. The reaction was tremendous. The young secretary of the Center took me for some refreshments. He was so excited he could hardly keep his seat, as he told me the struggle he and other young liberals were having. They almost joined the Catholic-monarchist group last summer, he said, because that group at least had real convictions and a real program. "We liberals are lost without faith," he said, "But what shall that faith be?"

In the exclusive Faculty of Philosophy and Letters of the University of Buenos Aires I spoke on three types of present-day leadership, Hoover, Stalin and Gandhi, appealing to the students to follow the leadership of Christ. I was detained for over an hour by the students discussing the question after the lecture. "You speak like an apostle," was the most common comment on my appeals. South America wants to hear as never before apostles of a new spiritual order.

How can the open-minded people of the Americas be made acquainted?

Here is one of the great jobs for the Committee on Coöperation in Latin America. And in the process of acquaintanceship the vital dynamic of the Christian message can be introduced to give to liberals the thing they so often lack, an emotional conviction and a positive program. Both the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant churches are so busy with their own internal problems that they are not getting out among the masses of people and showing the ways in which religion can provide the dynamic needed for the solution of the many problems overwhelming these countries. We need to lead in giving the message outside church walls.

The Committee on Coöperation in Latin America is already doing something along these lines.

Outreach of One Man's Life

Last July I went to the office of the Committee on Coöperation in Brazil and sat at the desk of Professor Erasmo Braga who had left his office a few weeks before for a higher service in the land beyond. I went through the accumulated mail. Here was correspondence with the Japanese Foreign Office and Japanese Christian Church concerning the Japanese emigrants in Brazil. Here were inquiries from a number of European organizations for international peace and Christian coöperation. Here were letters from various South American countries, the West Indies, and the United States asking for friendly advice, personal counsel, or various kinds of statistical information. Here were letters from several foreign offices and one from an officer in Portuguese West Africa. What a life Erasmo Braga had lived! How he touched not only Brazil but all the world! In his own land he associated with the inspired leaders in education and in government. He wrote the readers used in the public schools which inspired many thousand children. The Rotary Clubs of

Brazil, the Historical Society, the National Educational Association and dozens of other civic and educational organizations as well as representatives of his own church and many Roman Catholics, including a group of nuns who were his devoted friends, paid tribute to him at the time of his death.

Before the Committee on Coöperation was organized with Professor Braga as its secretary the churches in Brazil were sectarian groups continually quarrelling among themselves. Today they are developing a spiritually social vision which promises much for the Brazilian people. When I examined the financial condition of the Committee on Coöperation in Brazil I found that instead of taking the $2,500 per year which our New York Committee sent to him for salary, he had taken only $1,800 per year and left the rest for the work to which he was so devoted. Here is one example of what an evangelical leader can contribute. Our friend Erasmo did not always have this large conception of Christian service. He had grown into it during the years, and one of the greatest things that the New York Coöperation Committee has done was to encourage him in such growth.

La Nueva Democracia

I think of what this committee is doing in the publication of *La Nueva Democracia*. Wherever one goes, one meets with people who have had their vision enlarged, their faith renewed and their purposes strengthened by reading this magazine. This is the only magazine in the Spanish language which conveys month by month to the general public of Latin America a Christian interpretation of what is happening in the world and a definite conviction, without sectarian emphasis, that there is a Christian solution for every problem. Not only are its articles widely copied, but a little higher criticism reveals that often the best editorials and articles of other publications are based on the ideals set forth in *La Nueva Democracia*. I could mention many of the most influential men in South America, like Dr. Palacios, already named, who say they have been deeply influenced by the magazine. This means that the life of many others has been also affected through these influential characters.

Colegio Internacional

A little while after the Panama Congress, this committee was instrumental in developing a coöperative relation with the Methodist Episcopals and the Disciples in the River Plate District. These two organizations joined in the supporting of Ward College and a Union Training School for Church Workers in Buenos Aires. Ward College has just laid the corner stone for new buildings in the presence of the Minister of Education and a distinguished group of Argentines and North Americans. The school is an outstanding influence in Argentina. The Methodists arranged to concentrate their work in Argentina and turned over the Paraguayan field to the Disciples. As secretary to this committee I was asked to go to Asuncion to study the way for beginning this work. I recommended the sending of a missionary to attend the university for a year and make contacts in the city while he worked on the program to be adopted. A small school was started the next year. Today Colegio Internacional is to Paraguay what Robert College is to Turkey. Indeed the former institution still more largely dominates the life of the city where it functions. It has on its faculty the Director General of National Education, the Inspector General of Schools, the Director of the National College and several leading educators in Paraguay, including a Roman Catholic priest.

When the University of Paraguay desires to invite a visitor to lecture, the lec-

ture is held in the fine, spacious auditorium of the Colegio with the Rector presiding and usually the Minister of Education and other distinguished representatives of Paraguay present. A member of the American Legation is responsible for a series of musicals given every year at the institution and the symphonic orchestra of the city gives its recitals in the school's auditorium. To walk down the street with the Director, Dr. Elliott, is a liberal education in Paraguayan life; he knows everyone. I was not in the city three hours before he had taken me in to greet the President of the Republic, the Minister of Education and the Mayor of the city. An English visitor recently said that he regarded the institution as the best private school in South America. The six American teachers are thoroughly immersed in the life of the city.

Modern educational methods are working out through this college into the educational system of the Republic. They make special efforts to make the teaching of the Bible interesting and effective. Those classes are called "conversations" and recently a project of one of the classes involved the participation not only of the students but a number of the best people of the community. Recently the government asked permission to have the National Teachers' Association meet at the Colegio and the Rector and the Minister of Education worked out jointly the program.

In 1917, when I first visited Asuncion, religion was at such a low ebb that there were posters on the street corners with the demand *"Abajo con la Religion!"* (Down with Religion). On this last visit the auditorium of the Colegio was crowded with parents and children, government officials, rich and poor alike, to listen to an appeal to follow Christ in this solemn hour of the world's need.

Other Schools

This is only one of the schools which the committee has helped through a united campaign of "South American Educational Advance" to secure new buildings and enlarge their work. If one is inclined to be discouraged about the missionary enterprise, he can have his faith renewed by visiting Santiago College, where the girls of that city are being educated for the finest womanhood; Instituto Ingles where the best of the young manhood of the city are being trained in the modern Dalton system, carried out in the most approved way in modern buildings; Ward College in Buenos Aires, where the young men of that great Republic are finding the highest moral as well as educational development; Bennett College in Rio de Janeiro; Crandon Institute in Montevideo; and other schools which I did not visit on this particular trip. A new opportunity of service is offered to the committee today to bring into a more helpful unity all these schools and develop methods for extending their work into adult educational fields.

Radio broadcasting is one of the methods recently introduced by the South American representative of this committee, Dr. George P. Howard, to reach the general public with the Christian message. After a broadcast in Santiago, Chile, on the struggle between the individual and society, Dr. Howard was invited to become a lecturer at The Workman's University. "This is a curious university," says Dr. Howard. "They have a large building, the beginnings of a library, a table or two upon which the professors can place their notes or books, and that is about all. They have no seats or chairs for the 'student body.' But what a student body! No rich men's sons here nor flappers with painted nails, but a mass of eager workers who feel that this is their day and that the salvation of

humanity depends upon them and who will stand for an hour and listen as long as you have, not *something* to say, but something that you *must* say. They are not particularly interested in saving their country. *They are thinking in world terms.* I have carte blanche to talk to them on any cultural, philosophic or religious subject I desire."

Professor Baez Camargo, secretary for Coöperation in Mexico, is now recognized in cultural circles of that country as a contributor to the best literature on social and moral themes. He not only writes himself but manages a book store and is beginning the publication of a small library of books that will help guide the youth of Mexico in this new day. This kind of a small edition of "Everyman's Library" will contain collections called "Adventure," "Youth's Interests," "Fraternity," "Renaissance" and "Spirit and Truth."

United Administration

The Laymen's Inquiry has lately pressed the necessity of a more united administration of missionary work. The question, however, which seems to bother people is how unity may be achieved practically. Fortunately, the Committee on Coöperation has for some of the countries of Latin America already developed a machinery which could function in this united way. The most outstanding illustration is the Board of Christian Work in Santo Domingo, organized by this committee. A number of boards unite their budgets for this work and administer it from the office of the Coöperation Committee. The churches in Santo Domingo have pastors from various denominations but no denominational names are used. The work is completely united and has been most successful.

The Committee on Coöperation in Brazil organized three years ago a united mission to the Brazilian Indians which is administered by the committee and supported by the national churches. A group of workers to these Indians includes a Brazilian physician, a Brazilian agriculturist and a North American evangelistic worker. A union literature program is carried forward by these regional committees in Mexico, Porto Rico, Brazil, Argentina and Chile.

In 1914, under the leadership of the chairman of this committee, Dr. Robert E. Speer, the whole evangelical work of Mexico was reorganized with a redistribution of territorial responsibility and the development of a union theological seminary and a union literature program. Since then conditions have very greatly changed and today the Committee on Mexico is considering whether there cannot be another great advance in a more unified and better adapted Mexican program. Porto Rico would seem to offer a field where a united program comparable to the one in Santo Domingo might now be developed. This would be easier because three of the eight denominations of Porto Rico have organically united. In South America probably the easiest field for such a united program is Chile where the two strongest boards, Methodist and Presbyterian, are already in closest coöperation and conversations concerning unity have proceeded for a number of years.

The great new call for service today is one to a larger inclusiveness, uniting all on the American continent who earnestly seek for a new age wherein dwelleth righteousness, peace and justice. The unity of these forces I believe is of first importance for success in bringing about a new order, that order which Christ called the Kingdom of God.